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MANAGEMENT REVIEW: ISSUES CONCERNING THE UNICEF MISSION

SUMMARY

Although the UNICEF mandate has undergone important modifications since the founding of the organization in 1946, the Executive Board has maintained a solid consensus concerning most aspects of that mandate. In some areas, however, Executive Board guidance on the mandate may need to be updated in light of changing national and global environments, and the expectations of UNICEF partners and allies, as well as of the general public. The present report is an effort to present those issues in a way that might facilitate their consideration by the Executive Board, UNICEF staff and the organization's partners and allies, with a view to the preparation of a mission statement that will guide UNICEF work into the next century.

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* E/ICEF/1995/13.

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INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision 1995/12 (E/ICEF/1995/9 (Part I)), the Executive Board decided to consider the question of the UNICEF mission, including emergencies, at its 1995 annual session. At the request of the Bureau of the Executive Board, the present document has been prepared to facilitate discussion of the topic by the Board as well as among UNICEF staff, partners and allies. The UNICEF secretariat is convinced that a broad discussion of the UNICEF mission at the present time is important, and senior management is particularly concerned that staff at all levels, both at headquarters and in the field, participate fully in such a discussion. The new UNICEF Executive Director will, no doubt, also wish to contribute to the discussion.

2. With any organization that is alive and growing, questions arise concerning the boundaries of its activities under changing circumstances. For a large, global organization such as UNICEF, the absence of such questioning at the end of the twentieth century would be more cause for alarm than the reverse. The following is an attempt to present, for members of the Executive Board, partners, allies and staff, some of the main issues around which such a discussion is likely to focus. This is not intended to predetermine the manner in which any of those issues is discussed, but rather to stimulate a healthy debate, including debate about the way the issues should be framed.

3. A brief historical perspective on the UNICEF mandate is provided in chapter I, followed by a summary of those aspects of the mission on which there appears to be broad consensus in chapter II. Finally, chapters III and IV sketch some issues on which the UNICEF secretariat would welcome wide discussion.

I. SOME HISTORICAL PARAMETERS

4. UNICEF came into being in December of 1946 as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (General Assembly resolution 57 (I), 11 December 1946). During the first several years of its existence, its resources were devoted largely to meeting the emergency needs of children in war-torn industrialized countries, mostly in eastern and western Europe and Japan, for food and clothing. By 1950, UNICEF had shifted its main emphasis to programmes of long-term benefit to children of developing countries, although it never lost its emergency mandate. In October 1953, the General Assembly decided to continue UNICEF indefinitely, dropping the words "International" and "Emergency" from the name but retaining the acronym UNICEF, which had already become well known (General Assembly resolution 802 (VIII), 6 October 1953). During the following decades, UNICEF cooperation evolved from relatively isolated projects to a country programme approach based on a thorough situation analysis and the concerned Government's own priorities and policies for children. From the outset, voluntary contributions were the source of the organization's funding. UNICEF has been unique among United Nations agencies in having a wide base of support among the public, largely through the work of National Committees for UNICEF. Over the years, UNICEF has consistently derived some one quarter of its income from non-governmental sources (E/ICEF/608/Add.9).

5. The UNICEF mandate evolved over the years, largely from practical experience. As knowledge of the dimensions of the world-wide situation of children grew, greater emphasis was placed on support to countries in the areas of policy and planning for children in national development. The basic services strategy and the development of work at subnational levels, including urban basic services, were features of the 1970s. The concept of primary health care was one very successful application of the basic services strategy. The success of the International Year of the Child (IYC) in 1979 led to a further broadening of the scope of concerns of UNICEF, which was designated by the General Assembly

as the lead agency for the development aspects of follow-up to IYC (resolution 34/4, 18 October 1979; resolution 36/197, 17 December 1981; and resolution 37/231, 20 December 1982). In the 1980s, the child survival and development revolution gave focus to UNICEF activities in support of practical, cost-effective measures with a provable impact on children. The recognition by UNICEF that the concerns of children needed to be incorporated within the mainstream of economic policy-making became embodied in its work and advocacy for "adjustment with a human face". Also during that period, international consensus was building towards the preparation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. With the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the General Assembly in 1989 (resolution 44/25, 20 November 1989) and the convening in 1990 of the World Summit for Children, new implications were created for the UNICEF mandate and mission. UNICEF was assigned tasks related to follow-up of the World Summit while, for the first time in any international treaty, the organization was named as having special responsibilities in fostering the effective implementation of the Convention nationally and internationally. Not all of the implications of those momentous developments for the UNICEF mission have been made fully explicit, and the current effort to produce a mission statement provides the occasion to examine these more in depth.

II. AREAS OF GENERAL CONSENSUS

7. Aspects of the UNICEF mission on which there appears to be broad consensus are summarized below.

A fund for children

8. At the risk of belabouring the obvious, the fact that the UNICEF mission is one directed at the well-being of children is fundamental. Working for the most vulnerable members of society - those who are also the future of humanity - has won UNICEF a privileged place among noble causes competing for public attention and support. Because children are non-controversial, UNICEF is seen as non-political and appealing to all.

9. It is also worth pointing out that the organization is a fund. It depends, and has always depended, on voluntary contributions, and its mission includes fund-raising as well as programme support. Although it has worked closely with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from its early days, UNICEF has always used its resources mainly for support of programmes in which the organization is directly involved, not as a fund to which others apply for support. This, in turn, implies that the organization is accountable to its donors for the use that is made of their contributions.

The definition of children

10. Although there has been some fluctuation in emphasis over the years as to the age-group included within the UNICEF mandate, which originally encompassed "children and adolescents" (General Assembly resolution 57 (I)), it would seem that international consensus has now been reached around the definition contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which defines a child as "... every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (article 1).

The whole child

11. If the focus of UNICEF support in its origins was mainly on the physical needs of children, it was recognized quite early in the organization's history that this support must be extended to the "whole child" (General Assembly

resolution 2057 (XX), 16 December 1965), covering all aspects of the child's physical, mental and social development.

Non-discrimination

12. The directive of the General Assembly in its 1946 resolution founding UNICEF (57 (I)), that UNICEF assistance should be provided to all children "... on the basis of need, without discrimination because of race, creed, nationality status or political belief" (para. 2 (b) (ii)), has been a guiding principle for UNICEF over the years in many difficult situations. In light of subsequent Board discussions, current policy also includes the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of gender.

Gender equality and the girl child

13. There is abundant consensus that UNICEF should pursue its mission in the future with greater awareness of, sensitivity to and support for the gender dimensions of that mission. The Executive Board has stressed the themes of gender equality and gender-sensitive development (E/ICEF/1994/13, decision 1994/A/4). As a development agency in the social sector, UNICEF, like all other United Nations agencies, is mandated to promote equality. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (General Assembly resolution 40/108, 13 December 1985) oblige the organization to ensure gender equality. Such a focus also involves greater attention to the role of men and fathers within the family and society.

14. There is also general agreement concerning the priority attention that should be given to the girl child (including adolescent girls up to 18 years of age) in the many circumstances in which girls are objects of discrimination and/or have been historically disadvantaged (E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/17).

The country approach

15. The UNICEF mode of cooperation evolved over its first 25 years from one directed at specific projects in discrete sectors to one in which Governments and UNICEF agree jointly on a programme of cooperation rooted firmly in a thorough review of the situation of children in the country and national goals, policies, priorities and plans for dealing with that situation, including, since 1990, the national programme of action (NPA) for achieving the goals of the World Summit for Children. The Executive Board has repeatedly reaffirmed this approach as basic to UNICEF cooperation.

Priority for the most disadvantaged

16. The principle has evolved over the years and has been reiterated so frequently by the Executive Board that there is little, if any, disagreement that a priority call on UNICEF resources belongs to the most disadvantaged countries, especially the least developed countries (LDCs) (the majority of which are currently in Africa), disadvantaged groups within countries and disadvantaged persons within households, often women and girl children. Analogously, while including all children and adolescents in the scope of its activities, UNICEF has given priority to the young child (E/ICEF/633).

Child survival, development and protection

17. Three aspects of child well-being have come to categorize UNICEF work and priorities - survival, development and protection. Where the very lives of a large proportion of children are threatened, child survival has had a priority call on UNICEF resources. As child mortality rates are lowered, development and protection assume a correspondingly larger place in UNICEF cooperation.

Basic services for children

18. Although additional areas of cooperation have been included in the UNICEF mission over the years, and the balance among various approaches in different country situations has changed from time to time, there has been firm and consistent backing from the Executive Board for UNICEF support to countries for the delivery of basic services for children in the core areas of health, education, nutrition, clean water supplies and environmental sanitation, and child protection. The inclusion of these areas as matters of right in the Convention on the Rights of the Child has strengthened even further the rationale for their centrality in the UNICEF mission. Areas of child protection have expanded over the years to include street children and children who are disabled, in armed conflict, affected by natural disasters, in exploitative work situations, abused and neglected, refugees, orphans and victims of sexual abuse (E/ICEF/661; E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/12; and E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/6). The area of children and the environment was added at the beginning of the 1990s (E/ICEF/1989/12, decision 1989/18; E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/2; E/ICEF/1992/14, decision 1992/31; and E/ICEF/1993/14, decision 1993/14).

Children in emergencies

19. Although the word "emergency" was removed from the organization's name in 1953, the organization has virtually always been involved in emergencies of some kind. This stems essentially from the extensive UNICEF field presence and the fact that emergencies, whether due to natural or human causes, tend to affect the most vulnerable portion of the population, especially children and women. When a major emergency affecting children occurs, it is practically unthinkable that UNICEF would not respond. Children in armed conflict, children who are victims of natural disasters and refugee children are explicitly included in the category of "children in especially difficult circumstances", which the Board has endorsed for UNICEF programme support (E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/12; and E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/6). The Executive Board also has supported the UNICEF pursuit of the concept of "children as a zone of peace". Through experience in conflict situations over the years UNICEF has acquired a unique and special role as a neutral advocate and mediator for children, for the special rights of children to be protected during conflict and for the right to serve children and women on all sides of the struggle. Issues concerning the nature and extent of the organization's involvement in emergencies are discussed in paragraphs 39-40 below.

Capacity-building

20. Always a part of the UNICEF mandate, support for building and strengthening national, subnational and local capacities in areas that benefit children has received growing emphasis over the years. The work of UNICEF is aimed at helping people to help themselves, not at perpetuating dependency on external support. Collaboration with NGOs also has a strong capacity-building emphasis, where required. The 1992 multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF indicated that it could receive even greater emphasis (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7).

Empowerment

21. The empowerment of children and women has long been an implicit part of the UNICEF mission, but the meaning and scope of this concept have been more recently defined by the Executive Board as empowerment "through development of knowledge and skills, the promotion of target group organization and participation in decision-making and the strengthening of cooperation within civil society" (E/ICEF/1994/13, decision 1994/A/8, para. 2 (c)). The empowerment of girls and women was given particular emphasis at the 1994 annual session of the Executive Board. Empowerment of communities, always a part of

the basic services strategy, has taken on new importance in the Bamako and related initiatives. Paragraphs 41 and following discuss some new challenges in the area of empowerment.

Sustainability

22. Ensuring the sustainability of what is achieved through UNICEF cooperation has been implicit in the UNICEF mandate from the beginning. This aspect of the organization's mandate has been made more explicit and has been given increasing emphasis by the Executive Board and the UNICEF secretariat in recent years (e.g., E/ICEF/1987/11, decision 1987/17; E/ICEF/1989/12, decision 1989/5; E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/2; and E/ICEF/1993/14, decision 1993/7).

Advocacy and social mobilization

23. The UNICEF advocacy function stems largely from public expectations that it serve as the world's "conscience" regarding the young in both developing and industrialized countries. The near universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child has given that advocacy role a clearer ethical basis and a greater urgency. In developing countries, advocacy and social mobilization have been an increasing part of the country programme. Especially since the World Summit for Children and the development of NPAs for children, the UNICEF programme of cooperation has served more and more to help mobilize the resources of many partners and allies within the country towards the achievement of national goals for children.

24. In the industrialized countries, the General Assembly has "welcom[ed] the efforts of the Fund to bring the needs of children and adolescents in developing countries to world-wide attention ..." (resolution 2855 (XXVI), 20 December 1971). The Executive Board has recognized UNICEF efforts "to mobilize public and private concerns for the well-being of children of the developing world, whether or not such support was connected to UNICEF ..." (E/ICEF/1984/12, para. 119). In publications such as The Progress of Nations, UNICEF advocacy has extended to the well-being of children in industrialized countries as well.

Knowledge about children

25. UNICEF has gradually developed into a repository of information on the world's children. This has occurred not only globally, through such publications as The State of the World's Children, but also nationally, through the support UNICEF offers for national information and information systems in areas that affect children through the analyses and special studies on children, women and the family it undertakes and sponsors. UNICEF country offices function more and more as knowledge-centres on children.

An operational, field-oriented organization

26. While UNICEF deals increasingly in knowledge about children, its raison d'être is action to produce positive change for children. Technical expertise, information and research are all made use of, but for their practical impact in the field. Consistent with this, the bulk of UNICEF staff members are located in field offices and responsibilities are decentralized. In larger countries, staff are located in zone offices as well as in the capital cities, and UNICEF has worked, with Executive Board approval, to strengthen institutions and services benefiting children at intermediate and local levels.

Focus and selectivity

27. While the global scope of UNICEF concerns includes a large age-group, all aspects of child well-being and a broad range of problems, its activities in any

given country are necessarily selective. Country programmes, while based on a comprehensive review of the situation of children, commit UNICEF to support a limited, strategic set of activities that are chosen - according to the UNICEF comparative advantage and complementarity with the actions of others - for their catalytic and advocacy effect, as well as for their direct impact on a specific number of beneficiaries.

Inter-agency cooperation

28. From the very beginning, UNICEF has been a part of the United Nations system, working in close cooperation with its sister agencies, each according to its mandate and comparative advantage, and often taking the initiative and leadership to strengthen effective collaboration. Because of its multisectoral concerns, UNICEF has an important stake in the success of inter-agency cooperation, not only to make the entire United Nations system work for the benefit of children, but also to assure that progress for children contributes to the overall United Nations development effort. None of the Executive Board-approved goals for children and development in the 1990s can be achieved by UNICEF alone. Similarly, achievement of the goals and objectives of recent United Nations conferences on the environment, population, social development and women require that the system's goals for children also be reached. In recent years, UNICEF has played a leading role within the United Nations system in defining the basis for more effective collaboration, without blurring the mandates, effectiveness, accountability and comparative advantage of the different agencies. More recently, the resident coordinator system and the directives of General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992 have given greater emphasis and specificity to inter-agency cooperation.

III. ISSUES MERITING BROAD DISCUSSION

29. Without prejudice to further considerations on any of the above topics, or other aspects of the UNICEF mission not mentioned in the present report, the UNICEF secretariat considers that the issues presented below could benefit from further discussion.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

30. There is no doubt that the original UNICEF mandate was to provide assistance to children "on the basis of need" (General Assembly resolution 57 (I)). With the General Assembly's adoption in 1989 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the subsequent ratification of the Convention by nearly all countries of the world, a change is occurring in the basic ethic of development work for children. The Convention recognizes child survival, development and protection as more than just needs. They are inalienable rights as well. The recognition of these rights is having a profound effect on the way that many who work for the welfare of children, including UNICEF staff, perceive their mission.

31. The changing perception of the UNICEF mission is closely related to the call of the 1992 multi-donor evaluation for UNICEF to play a greater role as a "critical partner" of Governments, with the obligation to monitor and address non-compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7). It is clear that the primary responsibility for monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child within the United Nations system is that of the United Nations Centre on Human Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF may be invited by the Committee to provide expert advice and to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention, in accordance with article 45 of that document. Most recently, the General Assembly requested the Committee on the Rights of the Child "... to

invite the Fund, in collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, to submit reports on specific issues related to, inter alia, the exploitation and abuse of children ..." (resolution 49/211, 23 December 1994). The Executive Board has directed UNICEF to play certain specific roles regarding implementation of the Convention, including data-gathering, reviews of legislation, studies, capacity-building and education on child rights among children, youth and influential groups (E/ICEF/1991/15, decision 1991/9).

32. All of the developments outlined above have led to a heightened awareness of child rights issues among UNICEF staff and the partners and allies around the world with whom they work. A number of developing country Governments and NGOs have welcomed UNICEF support for their efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to monitor the success of those efforts. Others are concerned that the publicized denunciation of violations of children's rights (as opposed to behind-the-scenes advocacy) may compromise the historic neutrality that has enabled UNICEF to assist children in some very difficult circumstances. In clarifying its role in child rights advocacy, UNICEF must respond both to growing public expectations that it serve as the "world's conscience" on all matters relating to children, and to the need to work constructively with Governments to improve the situation of children. This seems to argue in favour of flexibility and balance rather than a rigid formula for responding to abuses of children's rights.

Women in the mandate of UNICEF

33. While there is little, if any, debate around the themes of gender equality and priority for the girl child, the issue that could benefit from further clarification concerns adult women as direct objects of UNICEF programme support, beyond their relationship to children.

34. Because of its focus on children, UNICEF has been perceived in the past, and is still so perceived in some quarters, as being concerned with women exclusively in their role as mothers, to the detriment of other roles of women in society. The Executive Board has specifically addressed the issue, agreeing in 1980 that UNICEF "should advocate a broad perception of women in society and in the development process, taking the view that women were not limited to motherhood or domestic roles but should be seen in the totality of women's roles - as mothers and wives, as economic providers, as citizens and leaders at all levels, and as individuals in their own right" (E/ICEF/673, para. 149 (a)), and reaffirming in 1985 "its commitment to strengthen support actions that would yield direct social, health and economic benefits to women living in poverty, for their own well-being and in recognition of the fact that improvement of women's conditions was a necessary prerequisite for social development and for the improvement of the health and well-being of children" (E/ICEF/1985/12, para. 92 (a)). These Board-approved policies have led to UNICEF support for many programmes of direct benefit to women as women, not solely as mothers, although some, including the 1992 multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF, contend that UNICEF continues to focus too exclusively on women in their reproductive role as mothers.

35. The well-being of children - especially that of girls - is intimately related to that of women, and women's well-being cannot and should not be narrowly compartmentalized into exclusively reproductive functions. It is recognized more clearly today than ever before that societies, and their children, will not advance unless women are helped to advance. It is, however, true that UNICEF is the United Nations Children's Fund, not the United Nations Children's and Women's Fund. There are other United Nations entities whose mandates are specifically targeted at women. The direct appeal of UNICEF to its donors is fundamentally in the name of children. The focus on children has given UNICEF its identity and clarity of purpose. A new statement of the UNICEF mission will have to take these points into account.

The role of UNICEF in industrialized countries

36. Although the first beneficiaries of UNICEF support were mainly children in industrialized countries recovering from the Second World War, it is the developing countries that have been the recipients of the organization's assistance since the decade of the 1950s, with the industrialized countries as the principal donors. However, when some countries that had been donors entered into difficulties at the end of the 1980s, the Executive Board, in its decision 1990/5 (E/ICEF/1990/13), while reconfirming the UNICEF commitment to concentrate its financial support in developing countries, authorized a "special effort of transitional support" for them. Although the level of support for countries in transition has been small, it appears that the selection of those countries that are to receive direct financial support from UNICEF depends essentially on the principle of priority for the most disadvantaged discussed in paragraph 16 above.

37. In the area of advocacy, however, UNICEF has never been limited to developing countries. Its advocacy efforts in industrialized countries have been not only on behalf of children in developing countries, but also, as expressed in the report of the 1984 Executive Board, "to increase understanding of the needs of children everywhere" (E/ICEF/1984/12, para. 119). On occasion, UNICEF advocacy has encompassed programme approaches and policy analyses that are applicable in both industrialized and developing countries. The spread of modern means of transportation and the globalization of the economy have given rise to new problems that can be addressed only globally. Problems such as sex-trafficking, child labour, the AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) epidemic and the decline of breast-feeding call for solutions that transcend the divisions that separate developing from developed countries.

38. Industrialized countries participated in the 1990 World Summit for Children and signed the same Declaration and Plan of Action as did developing countries. The Plan of Action requested UNICEF, as the world's lead agency for children, to prepare a consolidated analysis of the plans and actions undertaken by individual countries and the international community in support of the child-related development goals for the 1990s (para. 35 (v)). These plans and actions include those of the industrialized countries. UNICEF reports such as The State of the World's Children and The Progress of Nations regularly include information on the situation of children in all countries. Industrialized countries have also almost universally ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Given those developments, the definition of the UNICEF mission with respect to the Convention on the Rights of the Child must also seek to clarify its role with regard follow-up to the World Summit for Children and implementation of the Convention in industrialized countries.

Emergencies

39. Although the inclusion of emergencies within the UNICEF mandate has never been in question, over the years, the nature and extent of the UNICEF emergency response have been the subject of repeated discussion at the UNICEF Executive Board. Between the early 1950s and the beginning of the 1990s, however, the proportion of UNICEF resources devoted to emergencies was usually well below 10 per cent (except for a rise to 20 per cent in 1980, at the time of the Cambodia emergency). The growing number of complex emergencies and the increased proportion of funds devoted to them in the 1990s have heightened concern over the issue, even though such increases have been funded almost entirely from supplementary funds, mostly without any decline in UNICEF support for non-emergency programmes. As a proportion of total expenditure, emergency expenditure rose from an average of under 10 per cent between 1982 and 1990 to 27 per cent in 1993 and 1994. The Executive Board has expressed its wish to discuss the policy and strategy implications of this trend, especially in light of the observations of the current management review.

40. All of the elements of the overall UNICEF mandate help to specify its role in emergencies as well. For example, the UNICEF focus is on children, in emergencies as well as in longer-term development. Its concern is for the "whole child", a concern that brings an integrative approach to emergency interventions and to partnerships with sector-specific relief and service delivery agencies. Its priorities are towards the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, towards the girl child, and so on. Similarly, the areas for further discussion concerning the overall UNICEF mandate affect its mandate in emergencies as well, especially the area of child rights. For example, international humanitarian law has long established the right of humanitarian intervention in civil conflict. However, only in recent years has there been increasing international consensus on the limits to sovereignty in contexts of human rights abuses. Already clearly mandated with responsibilities towards children in armed conflict, UNICEF is increasingly called upon to assert the rights of children in conflict situations.

41. The UNICEF secretariat welcomes the views of the Executive Board on these and other aspects of the organization's mission in emergencies.

The changing environment

42. Most of the present document has been written from the perspective of precedents and guidelines established in the past, but the Executive Board will also wish to adopt a forward-looking perspective on the mission. The environment in which the organization operates is undergoing profound transformations, and the UNICEF understanding of its mission must be attuned to, and even anticipate, these changes.

43. Among such changes are democratization, privatization of certain services, decentralization to subnational bodies and community responsibility, including payment for services. These changes are occurring virtually everywhere, but their impact is most serious in LDCs, particularly in Africa; and they are virtually being forced on countries in many instances. If nations wish to improve the well-being of their children, they must take these changes into account.

44. The ministries with which UNICEF is cooperating are either functioning under reduced budgets in real terms, or are not receiving the means to extend services to national coverage or to provide for population growth (in LDCs in Africa, health services cover on average one half of the population). In some instances, responsibility is being devolved upon provincial and municipal authorities without the corresponding resources, and privatization is being relied upon with insufficient concern for those who cannot afford the costs of private services.

45. All of this gives greater importance to civil society, as well as to community responsibility. The latter has a much wider meaning than "participation" by furnishing labour and local materials. It means that the community has a say in the choice and design of interventions, in their implementation and administration, and in their monitoring and evaluation. The community has to contribute to operating expenses through user charges and community levies, hence the importance of the community's priorities about to what it is ready to contribute. Other institutions in civil society, not only NGOs, but consumer groups, professional associations and the private sector, are likely to be even more important partners in development for children than in the past. The central ministries and subnational authorities with which UNICEF works must be assisted to adapt to working with this new set of partners, where they are not already doing so.

46. These and other profound changes are taking place in many countries. UNICEF is adapting to them in many cases, but their implications for the overall UNICEF mission call for more reflection and discussion.

IV. THE NATURE OF A MISSION STATEMENT

47. In addition to its content, the Board may wish to discuss the very nature of a mission statement and indicate just what it expects to see as the outcome of the current exercise. If the mission statement is to include lengthy considerations of policy and strategy on each major aspect of the UNICEF work, the resulting document will be very lengthy. A mission statement is generally understood to be a short, non-technical presentation of what the organization does, why it does what it does and what it hopes to achieve. A mission statement is usually intended to express the values of the organization. It is something with which everyone associated with the organization can identify - from the Executive Board to senior management to support staff to partners and allies, to donors and the general public.

48. This is somewhat different from a statement of the organization's mandate which, in the case of an entity such as UNICEF, is the outgrowth of history and many intricate high-level discussions, generally employing diplomatic phrasing and the language of compromise. It is intended to give direction and set boundaries rather than to inspire.

49. The Board may also wish to consider the time-frame that the mission statement should cover. The mission of a dynamic organization in a rapidly changing world will probably continue to evolve. Thus, some indication of the span of years that the mission statement is intended to cover might help to give it greater focus and immediacy. It will be a considerable challenge to produce a mission statement that is forward-looking and flexible enough to withstand the test of time, without being so general as to defeat the purpose of providing guidance and common direction.